

# Homework Task

**Key References at all times:**

The Core Text: Walking with God.

The Navarre Bible (Reference copy in the library.)

The Ignatius Study Bible (App and in library)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (can access in many ways, including the Laudete app)

Read the narrative of Noah and the Flood in Gen 6:11-8:22 and answer the following questions:

- 1) Where does this story fit in the Bible – what comes before and after, which book it is in, where it fits in the context of the whole Bible, etc.?

**Reference:** The actual bible passages: the one in focus and also to ones before and after it.

**Note:** No need to summarise the actual passage here. That happens in the next question.

This account is in the Book of Genesis. It recounts a time when the people of the earth have moved far from God. God asks Noah to build an ark.

Chapter 6: 1-10 precedes the passage. It describes how human beings had become corrupt. It speaks of the ‘Sons of God’ married ‘the daughters of man’. Noah is a good man living at this time, and God looked on him with favour.

Chapters 7, 8 and 9 follow the passage in focus. They describe of how events developed: the flood, the animals entering the ark, the destruction of life, the eventual subsiding of the flood and the establishment of the covenant between God and Noah. The sign of the covenant is the rainbow.

- 2) What is the story is really about?

**Note:** This question is always asking about the literal meaning of the passage

This is the account in Genesis when the people of the earth have moved far from God. God calls Noah and tells him that he will destroy the people of the earth. He asks Noah to build an ark and to take two of each kind of animal on it. God promises to set up a covenant with Noah.

- 3) What ethical message or messages are found in the story and how do they apply to us today?

**Note:** This question is asking you to identify the moral/ ethical meaning of the passage. It will be something that can be applied to people even today.

The ethical/ moral message of this passage is that when people move away from God and stop living according to his loving plan then they can easily fall into evil ways. Violence and all kinds of moral evils become rampant. The way to resolve that is to return to God: to listen to, and follow, his laws.

This message applies to people of today’s society in many ways. Despite having so many material goods, there is a profound rejection of God. The consequence is not happiness and peace, but unhappiness and violence. The message God brings through the account of Noah and the Flood is that only by returning to God will humanity regain it’s peace and happiness.

- 4) What, if any, links are there that may be made with other parts of the Bible or with the

## Sacraments?

Note: This is asking you to outline

- a. links between the Old Testament (written before Christ) and the New Testament (The accounts of the life and teachings of Christ and the first Christians and/or
- b. the way that the passage be 'foreshadowing' or 'prefiguring' one of the 7 sacraments. These are 7 sources of God's grace that the Church dispenses. Each sacrament finds its root and source in Jesus. Their origin can be found in the New Testament.

Also note: So you can see how I have sourced information I have chosen to insert the actual passages of the New Testament and the Catechism of the Catholic Church here. You could just refer to them and summarise key points.

This passage is understood to link with the Sacrament of Baptism.

Peter 3: 18-22 refers to this.

<sup>18</sup>For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. <sup>19</sup>After being made alive,<sup>18</sup> he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits— <sup>20</sup>to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, <sup>21</sup>and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God.<sup>19</sup> It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup>who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (1218-1220) also speaks of the connection between Noah's ark and Baptism:

**1219** The Church has seen in Noah's ark a prefiguring of salvation by Baptism, for by it "a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water".<sup>14</sup>

The waters of the great flood  
you made a sign of the waters of Baptism,  
that make an end of sin and a new beginning of goodness.<sup>15</sup>

**1220** If water springing up from the earth symbolizes life, the water of the sea is a symbol of death and so can represent the mystery of the cross. By this symbolism Baptism signifies communion with Christ's death.

Noah's Ark is also understood to prefigure the Church itself.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church: 845:

**845** To reunite all his children, scattered and led astray by sin, the Father willed to call the whole of humanity together into his Son's Church. The Church is the place where humanity must rediscover its unity and salvation. The Church is "the world reconciled." She is that bark which "in the full sail of the Lord's cross, by the breath of the Holy Spirit, navigates safely in this world." According to another image dear to the Church Fathers, she is prefigured by Noah's ark, which alone saves from the flood.<sup>334</sup>

5) What, if any, message or messages does it give regarding life after death, Heaven, Hell, etc.?

Note: This is asking you to look for meaning as related to the final destiny for Human Beings: Eternity with or without God.

I would say that a link to humanity's final destiny can be deduced when one considers the Ark as prefiguring the Church: the barque or boat that carries people to safety.

The Rainbow, though not mentioned in this particular passage, can signify the seven sacraments. The 7 colours of the rainbow each representing a sacrament. The Light of Christ in one clear light. When it goes through a prism, the light is refracted into separate colours. These are like the graces particular to each sacrament: somehow distinct, but always part of the same light.